

**2013 Preservation Award for Outstanding Heritage Stewardship
(Governor's Special Award)
to Flathead County for the Flathead County Courthouse
by Governor Steve Bullock
Myrna Loy Center, Helena
January 18, 2013**

The recipient of this year's award for Outstanding Stewardship in Historic Preservation and the Governor's Special Award goes to Flathead County for the historically sensitive renovation and rehabilitation of the Flathead County Courthouse.

Constructed in 1902, the prominent Flathead County Courthouse in Kalispell has served residents of Flathead County for 110 years. Over that time, its continuous use, the elements, and code changes related to safety necessitated that major rehabilitation and renovation be done.

Funding for this work came from grant funds and non-property tax funds. CTA Architects provided the architectural services and Martel Construction was awarded the construction bid. Much of the work satisfies safety issues including bringing the courthouse into compliance with current electrical, fire, environmental, and mechanical building codes in addition to improving and strengthening its structural integrity to current seismic standards.

Other changes include:

- a full-access ADA elevator,
- window repair and replacement to meet National Park Service standards,
- restoration of the grand stairway, and
- conversion of the main corridors to provide museum quality display space.

The grand stairway renovation involved recreating a section between the second and third floors that had been removed many years ago to construct an office and storage space. This work once again exposed all the front windows to provide natural light to the interior and allow the grand staircase to be seen from the building's exterior, as originally intended.

And lastly, the intrusive east and west annex buildings were removed, re-establishing the Courthouse in its central location and reaffirming the proud landmark status intended by the county fathers.

Flathead County succeeded in preserving and bringing back the historic character of their courthouse while enabling its use for another 100 years. Please join me in congratulating representatives of Flathead County, CTA Architects, and Martel Construction on their outstanding heritage stewardship efforts.